

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 1-24, which were subject to an election of species requirement, have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, and new claims 25-34 have been presented, where claim 25 is an independent claim and claims 26-34 depend directly or indirectly therefrom.

As to the requirement for election of a single disclosed species of alleged patentably distinct species identified by the Examiner as Group I (claims 1-11); Group II (claims 12-16); Group III (claims 17-20); and Group IV (claims 21-24); In which the Examiner has substantially reprinted Independent claims 1, 12, 17 and 21, while underlining specific features, which it is assumed is representative of the alleged patentably distinct species of the claimed invention, the requirement is considered to be obviated by the cancellation of claims 1-24 and, is traversed, Insofar as it is applicable to claims 25-34, as now presented.

Insofar as the Examiner previously contended that no generic claim was present, applicants note that each of the independent claims necessarily represent a generic claim with respect to the dependent claims thereof. Similarly, new independent claim 25 is necessarily generic with respect to dependent claims 26-34. Applicants note that insofar as the underlined features of the Independent claims are considered to represent different alleged patentably distinct species, applicants note that new independent claim 25 may be considered to correspond to claims of Group I in reciting a mold frame, a metal frame and a first columnar member, noting that claim 25 recites other features including a second columnar member, as recited in previous claim 6 of Group I. Applicants note further that claim 25 is more specifically directed to an optical sheet as shown in Figs. 9 and 10 of the drawings of this application, for example.

In view of the above amendment and remarks, applicants submit that the election of species requirement has been obviated and the present claims are

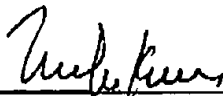
directed to a single disclosed species with claim 25 being generic and claims 26-34 being dependent directly or indirectly thereon, such that claims 25-34 should be considered.

Accordingly, favorable action with respect to claims 25-34, the only claims remaining in this application, is respectfully requested.

Applicants note that submitted herewith is an Information Disclosure Statement submitting documents prior to the first Office Action on the merits, it being recognized that the election of species requirement is not a first Office Action on the merits, such that the documents should be considered at this time.

To the extent necessary, applicant's petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (501.41004X00) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,



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